

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

AN OWL, *RHINOPTYNX CLAMATOR* (VIEILL.), ADDED
TO THE COSTA RICAN ORNIS.
BY OUTRAM BANGS.

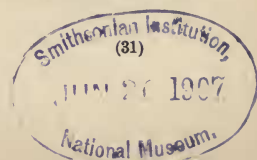
With a collection of birds made in another part of Costa Rica that will be reported upon later, Mr. C. F. Underwood sent Mr. John E. Thayer and me a fine adult male of the South American eared owl, *Rhinoptynx clamator* (Vieill.).

The specimen, now No. 17501, Coll. of E. A. and O. Bangs, in splendid condition of plumage, was taken in the vicinity of San José, Costa Rica, in January, 1906.

This is, I believe, the first record of the appearance of this owl in Costa Rica. One or two specimens were taken by McLeannan in Panama and one by Arcé in Veragua, which seem to be the only other recorded instances of its capture north of South America.

This species used to be called *Asio mexicanus* (Gmel.). Messrs. Salvin and Godman have, however, shown that the Mexican eared owl of Latham, on which the name was based, is not identifiable, and that the *Bubo clamator* of Vieillot is undoubtedly the first applicable name of the species. Most ornithologists, Kaup and Ridgway excepted, up to the present time (even Sharpe in Hand List of Birds), have associated this owl with the long-eared and short-eared owls, putting it in the genus *Asio* (= *Nyctalops*), according to the views of Stone and of Oberholser, *Asio* being properly the name of the great horned owls. But here also I see trouble ahead, because *Nyctalops* has as its type the peculiar species *stygius* which, with its huge bill, short wing, and other peculiarities can hardly be considered as congeneric with the long-eared owls and the short-eared owls.

In 1852 Kaup made a special genus, *Rhinoptynx* for *Asio mexicanus*.



Ridgway in 1875 gave it as his opinion that the bird was "a typical *Bubo*, although usually referred to the genus *Otus*." Salvin and Godman, in *Biologia Centrali-Americana*, refer to Ridgway's remarks, but again place the species in the genus *Asio*.

Rhinoptynx clamator certainly bears a strong superficial likeness to the long-eared owls, and the character of its plumage is the same, and not like that of the great horned owls. Otherwise it is very different, having very short wings and large feet, and while Ridgway may be right in considering it a "typical *Bubo*," its general unlikeness to the great horned owls has induced me to follow Kaup in placing it in a genus by itself.